

I CLAIM:

1. A slip-sheet picking and discarding mechanism comprising:

a roller having a longitudinal dimension spanning the width of
said slip-sheet;

5 rotating means connected with said roller;

at least one clamping means arranged along the longitudinal
dimension of said roller, each said at least one clamping means
having a clamping portion and a surface-contact portion; and

10 elevating means for elevating said roller and said at least one
clamping means, wherein said clamping portion is positioned at a
given distance from said roller when said roller and said surface-
contact portion are in contact with the surface of said slip-sheet, and
wherein said clamping portion is in contact with said roller when said
roller and said surface-contact portion are not in contact with the
15 surface of said slip-sheet.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, additionally comprising disposal means for
disposing said slip-sheet.

3. In a CTP imager, a method of picking a topmost slip-sheet from a
stack of plates, comprising the steps of:

20 providing an apparatus comprising:

a roller having a longitudinal dimension spanning the width
of said slip-sheet;

rotating means connected with said roller;

at least one clamping means arranged along the longitudinal dimension of said roller, each said at least one clamping means having a surface-contact portion and a clamping-portion; and

5 elevating means for elevating said roller and said at least one clamping means, wherein said clamping portion is positioned at a given distance from said roller when said roller and said surface-contact portion are in contact with the surface of said topmost slip-sheet, and

10 wherein said clamping portion is in contact with said roller when said roller and said surface-contact portions are not in contact with the surface of said topmost slip-sheet;

positioning said apparatus in a first position, wherein said roller and said surface-contact portion are in contact with said topmost slip-sheet;

15 rolling said roller, thereby creating a fold in said topmost slip-sheet and stopping said rolling operation according to predefined criteria; and

lifting said apparatus, thereby clamping said fold between said surface-contact portion and said roller.

20 4. The method of claim 3, additionally comprising, after said step of lifting, the step of:

rolling said roller a second time, thereby releasing said slip-sheet.